

From: Mark Mindenhall
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I urge the court to reject the proposed settlement reached between Microsoft and the DOJ, and instead proceed with the settlement proposed by the nine states which did not join the DOJ settlement.

I believe the nine states' proposal constitutes a most reasonable remedy which will dramatically reduce Microsoft's monopoly power and dramatically enhance competition.

Personally, I am more concerned about Microsoft's desktop monopoly (Win95, Win98, WinME, Win2000 Prof, WinXP Prof, WinXP Home, etc.) and office productivity monopoly (Microsoft Office) than the strength of their server operating systems. These two monopolies are tightly coupled, and each helps to preserve the other. Office is so strong that its file formats (.doc, .xls, .ppt primarily) have become de facto standards for exchange of complex information between individuals and businesses. Any company wanting to compete with Office needs to fully support reading, editing, and writing documents using these file formats. However, Microsoft provides little documentation of these file formats, which results in competitors having to "reverse engineer" the files to understand how the information is stored.

By simultaneously forcing Microsoft to reveal the details of their file formats, while also making Office available on competing platforms such as Linux and varieties of Unix, I think the states' proposal would dramatically increase competition in the desktop OS market. Also, other applications would be able to ensure 100% compatibility with Office documents, which would create viable alternatives for creating and exchanging documents using the de facto standard Microsoft file formats.

Mark Mindenhall